THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE TWELFTH SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA.

Saturday, the 1st March 1958.

The House met in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at three of the clock, Mr. Chairman (THE HON. DR. P. V. CHERIAN) in the Chair.

[*Note.*—**An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.**]

I.—CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION ON THE DEATH OF SRI MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD, UNION MINISTER FOR EDUCATION.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is my melancholy duty to inform the House of the sudden demise of Sri Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Union Minister for Education, on the 22nd February 1958 at his residence in New Delhi.

A noble scion of an illustrious family of Sufis and Divines, he was born in 1888 at Mecca. He came to Calcutta with his father at the early age of ten and adopted India as his homeland. He made phenomenal progress in his studies of Arabic and Urdu and obtained a high degree of proficiency and scholarship at the age of 14.

He entered politics at the time of the partition of Bengal. The whole nation began to fall under the spell of his eloquence and transparent patriotism. He worked for Hindu-Muslim unity with zeal and single-minded devotion born out of deep conviction. When the first world war broke out, the British Government suppressed his journal, Al Hilal (the Crescent) and interned him in Ranchi where he wrote ' Taskira ', his monumental commentary on Quoran. After his release, he played a predominant role in the Khilafat and Non-Co-operation Movements. He was imprisoned several times for his participation in the Civil Disobedience Movements in 1930, 1932 and in the ' Quit India ' Movement in 1942. He acted as the chief spokesman of the Congress Party during the negotiations with the Cripps Mission in 1942 and again with the British Cabinet Mission in 1946. In August 1947, he became the Minister for Education and continued to be the Minister for Education till his death in harness.

He visited Britain in connection with the future of the India Office Library in July 1955. He was responsible for the appointment of the Education Commission with Dr. Radhakrishnan as Chairman, the Secondary Education Commission with Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar as Chairman and the University Grants Commission with Dr. C. D. Deshmukh as Chairman. He was a versatile scholar, an elder statesman and a great educationist.

About all, he was a consistent and staunch nationalist. In his death, India has suffered a great loss and the void created is difficult to fill.

I now move the Condolence Resolution, namely :—

"This House places on record its deep sense of sorrow at the demise of Sri Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Union Minister for Education, and conveys its profound sympathy to the members of his bereaved family".

* THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to associate the Government with the sentiments of sorrow expressed by you just now. The country has lost one of its stalwarts. Sri Maulana Azad was the very synthesis of Indian culture. No statesman in India contributed so much to communal harmony as our revered leader Sri Maulana Azad has done. Not only did he try to bring about unity within the country but he also represented India in the courts of the West Asian countries and tried to create a very favourable atmosphere to India and her policies in the international world. Sri Maulana Azad was a scholar. He was deeply devoted to study and he held the office of Education Minister with distinction.

Sir, in his death, the country has suffered an irreparable loss and the only monument that we can erect to his memory is the endeavour that we make to preserve that spirit of cordiality between the various religious communities that inhabit India. As long as we cherish that ideal, we shall be faithful to the great soul. May his soul rest in peace.

* DR. V. K. JOHN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I associate myself and the Opposition with the sentiments expressed by you and the Hon. the Leader of the House, and the tributes paid to the late Maulana Azad. Sir, he had few equals in this country in the sacrifices and sufferings he went through in the freedom struggle. A great scholar and great statesman, he occupied a foremost place in the public life of the country. Apart from this, he gave a correct lead to his co-religionists, the Muslims. He was against the partition of this country. If the Muslims in India are patriotic, it is due mostly to the advice and the lead he has given. His death is a great national loss and we all mourn his death. I associate myself with the Resolution that you moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I request the hon. Members to stand in silence for a few minutes and pass the Resolution unanimously.

The Resolution was passed *nem. con.*, all the Members standing in silence for a few minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : As a mark of respect to the late Sri Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, I now adjourn the House for half an hour. The House will meet again at 3-35 p.m.

The House then adjourned.